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been slowly disintegrating under manifold pressures. 511
In prosperous periods in the past a delicate balance 182
of human and economic factors fostered a crowded, conformist, but on the whole, harmonious village life. Recent decades have seen the old harmony replaced by tension and a predatory struggle for survival. And, despite the isolation of most villages, ideas and ideals from the West have slowly undermined the authority of the older mores and customary laws.

Despite all the fissures that have developed, it 178
is well to remember that peasant life everywhere has a tremendous inertia, that it is incredibly resistant to all the forces of change. Thus, much of the sweeping change that occurred in city life under comparable pressures did not occur in the peasant villages.

The main economic and social unit of the village 527
is the family, and a special study is devoted to that 262
subject. Here we shall sketch the rhythm of village life and something of its annual cycle of activity.

The New Year holiday, for the people of China the first fifteen days of the year, is the main period of leisure for the villagers. Food is prepared in advance, and even the women may rest from their cooking during the first five days of the holiday. The town is decorated with nien-hua (New Year's pictures) and ch'un-lien (paired New Year's Day mottoes). Visiting friends and relatives, gambling, eating the best food of the year, wearing the best clothes, and indulging the children make this the most festive period of the year. For many familities it is the only time in the year when they can afford to eat meat dishes. The

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special dishes of the season vary from province to province. In a northern province such as Honan, chiao-tzu (meat dumplings) are particular favorites; as one moves south, rice-based delicacies such as nien-kao (year cakes) figure more prominently in the New Year's feasts. Besides being a time of celebration, the New Year is also the time for settling accounts, and, for many farmers there has been little left for celebrating when the creditors have all been dealt with.

The regular work of the agricultural year begins immediately after the New Year. In Honan the farming cycle is governed by the need to conserve water and by the demands of the principal crops: wheat, millet, kaoliang. From the Yangtze south through the Central-South Region, the year is phased by the steps in wet rice cultivation. In early spring, the Honan farmer begins his year-long effort to conserve moisture that has accumulated in the soil during the autumn and winter rains. About half of the fields are then in winter fallow awaiting the spring planting; the rest are planted in winter wheat. Fertilizer from the household pit is spread on the fallow fields. The wheat is brought to maturity by careful hoeing and by hand irrigation using well water -- a back-breaking operation in which the farmer is helped by his whole family.

In April or May comes the time to plant his remaining fields in millet, kaoliang, or cotton; often he must irrigate to assure the germination of seeds. Then comes the time to harvest the wheat, and once again the farmer calls on his whole family and often on his neighbors for harvesting, threshing, and winnowing, all done by hand with the greatest care to

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and dominates the economy. Much of the rice culture of this area is on level plains, but in recent years the terraced fields have been pushed higher and higher up denuded mountains and hillsides. In the early spring, after the New Year, the farmer brings up his rice plants in nursery beds near the farmhouse. Then he prepares his fields by plowing and removing, in some areas, his winter crop stubble. Fertilizer is carefully spread over the ground, and then water is admitted; when the water reached a certain depth, the ground is carefully harrowed. The ground is now ready for the transplating of the young rice from the nursery beds, and this backbreaking job, done while crouching in the water, completes the Spring work. Save for repeated cultivating and trampling of weeds, the farmer has an easier life during the ripening of the grain. As the grain ripens, the fields dry, and at last it is harvest time. The harvesting and threshing are again the work of all available hands and are done with primitive implements. The harvest in, the farmer must deal with the tax collector and then ready his fields for the winter crops; in some parts of the Central-South Region, this may be winter wheat and rape; in others two or three rice crops are produced in a single agricultural year. The rice farmer, like the wheat farmer of the north, uses winter for work on tools, handicrafts, repairs, and the women of his family may carry forward their raising of silk worms, spinning and weaving of silk. In other areas, tea is an important supplement to rice agriculture.[5]

B. Annual Festivals

The farm year, toilsome in north and south alike, is punctuated by other activities and festivals which relieve some of the monotony of the long seasons of

5. On the agricultural year cycle, see excellent description in Gerald Winfield, China, The Land and The People, New York, 1948, pp. 34-61.

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work. The first of the annual festivals after the New Year is that of Ch'ing-ming which corresponds in time to the Western Easter. Also like the Western Easter, it was once a Spring fertility festival. On this occasion the ties of the living and dead members of the family and clan are celebrated. Families often take picnics to the family or clan graveyard, make food offerings to the dead, sweep the graveyards, and then enjoy their feast. All relatives make special efforts to join in this annual celelbration of family solidarity, and the outing makes the occasion a pleasant relief from winter and indoor work.[6]

On the fifth day of the fifth lunar month is the Dragon Boat Festival. This is of southern origin and is traced by Eberhard to the human sacrifical rites of the Tai aborigines of south China.[7] In modern times it has been somewhat less popular in the north than in the south. It is in the south that the dragon boat races were held on rivers and lakes. For most rural families the festival meant somewhat better food than usual and particularly steamed rice dumplings known as tsung-tzu -- a counterpart to the rice sacrifices made on this occasion to the shade of Ch'u Yüan -- an ancient political martyr and poet of the feudal state of Ch'u.

On the fifteenth day of the seventh moon, usually in late August, is the feast of souls, the primitive origin of which has been transmuted by Buddhist belief and symbolism. It is at once a festival for the souls of one's ancestors and a community salute to the dead. Ancestral graves are cleared, sacrifices of food are made, and paper replicas of desirable ob-

6. Wolfram Eberhard, Chinese Festivals, New York, 1942, pp. 113-127.

7. Eberhard, op. cit., pp. 69-96.

jects are burned. The salute to the dead takes the form of floating paper boats with lanterns in them on some body of water, symbolizing the communities' concern that all the dead may be guided to the "other shore" -- Buddhist metaphor for salvation. Many pay visits to a nearby temple and pay for masses for the souls of all the dead, particularly for the souls of the people in the community who died without descendants to commemorate their passing. In this festival, too, special food is prepared for the dead and for the living, and the farmers and their families enjoy leisure and conviviality. 527 769

The mid-Autumn festival on the fifteen night of the eighth lunar month is basically a moon festival, and the ceremonies in honor of the moon carried out at moon-rise on this autumn night are full of the symbols of fertility and longevity. In modern times it has been mainly a festival of women, and the Old Man in the Moon is sacrificed to as the one who arranges all marriages on earth. The moon cakes, in the shape of the full moon, are one of the special delicacies of this season. This too was perhaps originally a fertility festival, and in some areas it is a popular time to make pilgrimages to nearby mountains.

These are the festivals that have continued to have the most significance for the Chinese farmer into modern times. Many of them have changed drastically through time and we shall shortly see that the Chinese Communists are greatly altering the meaning and symbolism of those few which they have allowed to survive.

In addition to the annual festivals, the farmer's life of toil may be relieved by ceremonial family events. A wedding meant, for those who could afford it, a great feast and ample wine; even the poorest familes made 527

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every effort to make a marriage ceremony festive. Practical jokes were played on the bridegroom, traditional songs were sung, and the guests, particularly the men, thoroughly enjoyed themselves. The births of male children were often celebrated as were the initiations of boys into adulthood, betrothals, and the like. In modern times the government of the Republic of China has decreed certain national holidays, but these were little observed by the farm villages.

In addition to these occasions for relaxation, there were activities which interested some of the villagers and helped to vary their lives. Itinerant dramatic troupes occasionally performed, and the storyteller spinning out his tales to the villagers until very recently was often seen. The election of a headman for the village often involved political maneuvering and a town meeting. Pilgrimages to famous mountains or shrines were often undertaken in the slack agricultural season for religious reasons or purely for relaxation. Perhaps the most universal recreation was, as in all illiterate communities, gossip and desultory conversation about the weather, the crops, the iniquity of the government, local disputes, and, on their rare occurrence, lawsuits involving fellow villagers. Despite the grim struggle for survival, the average villager tended to be cheerful, self-respecting, with a robust sense of humor. He went through life with a continuous concern for his own "face" or prestige among his fellows and with the strong determination that, despite all, the fortunes of his family might steadily improve.

C. Urban Life

City life, although it meant a different pattern of work, was closely akin to life in the villages. Town

and city dwellers kept their ties with their native villages, returned there whenever possible, and many saw commercial activity in the town only as means of the acquisition of sufficient wealth to buy farming land upon their return to the village. The town population, then, is mostly made up of artisans and peasants, plus a small number of landlords, retired officials, county functionaries, and established merchant families. The county seats (hsien capitals) were the centers for tax collection and administration of the surrounding farm-villages and also served as market towns where the peasant might sell his crop and purchase the manufactured goods he could not produce.

Town life for the average artisan was as meager as that of his relatives in the village. Long hours, hard work, low pay, few holidays were the lot of most, and living conditions were generally poorer and more crowded than those in the villages. Proprietors of many shops required their employees to live on the premises, so that they seldom visited their families. The diet of the town dweller was as poor as that of the poor farmer -- mostly cereals, vegetables, and some condiments, and meat and fruit on holidays only. Brief holidays were allowed at the New Year, the Ch'ing-ming festival, the mid-Autumn festival, and the Dragon Boat festival. On these occasions, townspeople usually tried to return to their villages; if this was impossible they enjoyed such delicacies as they could afford and strolled the streets, perhaps visiting friends and attending seasonal fairs and theaters.

Life in the towns was, then, closely linked with village life. But in the provincial capitals, such as

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Kaifeng, Changsha, and Canton, life in some respects has been greatly altered by the modernization that has spread from the coastal to the inland cities. The streets are paved, and schools, newspapers, movies, and radio make the people more aware of the outside world than their cousins in the towns and villages. In the cities, major industries built large dormitories for workers, labor unions and political clubs developed as new foci for social activity. Yet the living conditions grew worse as workers moved into the cities. Crowding reached unbelievable proportions. The only comparable figrues are for Chengtu, a city outside the Central-South area, but they suggest the dimensions of this problem in all urban centers. Chengtu, with predominantly one-storied buildings, had a population density of 50,000 per square mile as compared with 22,500 per square mile in New York City.[8] One survey suggests that workers in the newer industries were somewhat better off than workers in the traditional trades,[9] but their traditional holidays were shortened without, in most cases, the introduction of a six-day week. In the crowded cities the festivals of the agricultural year continued to determine the holidays, and (although national holidays were increasingly observed), like the town dwellers, city dwellers tried to return to their families villages for at least one of the holidays. Another link to one's native place was the system of clubs composed of those city-dwellers who had a common provincial

8. Winfield, op. cit., p. 88. These figures would seem to be for the period 1945-47.

9. Lang, op. cit., pp. 88-89.

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The seasonal short pilgrimage, in company, to some nearby shrine also has, in Hunan, its Communist counterpart: a mass pilgrimage from the city of Changsha to Mao Tse-tung's native village, which is being built up as a national shrine.[21] Despite its frontal attack on the old familism, the Communist government last year provided special trains to take city dwellers back to their native villages for the holiday; a mass exodus was reported from Peking.[22]

Ch'ing-ming is no longer an approved festival, presumably because of its function as a celebration of kinship ties and family continuity. The next approved traditional holiday is the Dragon Boat festival in June. The boat races have been revived, and the poet Ch'ü Yüan, now a "People's hero martyred in protest against a corrupt feudal regime," is the focus of celebrations.[23] The moon festival in autumn is also celebrated with extra food allowances and "cultural" activities. The various anniversaries of the Chinese Communists and of the world Communist movement probably do not break into the agricultural working year, but may be occasions for special propaganda arranged by the local cadre. It will be seen that the pattern of living in the villages has been drastically altered; what remains of the old pattern is precisely what the government and the Party permits in the interest of morale or adapts in the interest of their rural program of change and indoctrination.

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21. Ibid.
22. Ibid.; also, SCMP 972, 1954, p. 21.
23. SCMP 1075, June 23, 1955, p. 25.

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The New Year's holiday has retained some of its old gaiety, although within the same restrictions imposed on the peasant. The cities receive special shipments of seasonal delicacies, and trips back to the family village may be possible for a small percentage of town dwellers.[25] Major sports events and theatrical performances are scheduled for this season, and visitors from rural areas come to the city in large numbers. There is special provisioning of the city shops at the time of the mid-Autumn and the Dragon Boat festivals.

The cities have been cleaned up and enlarged, and building has apparently proceeded rapidly, although improvements in housing probably mainly affect the industrial workers, the favored class in the drive for industrialization.[26] Yet the Rostow study indicates that there has been no real increase in wages for the urban worker.[27] His diet remains poor, his work hours long. But since the Party is anxious to recruit from urban workers, he does have opportunity to rise in life through Party work. Many industrial workers probably do feel some sense of identification with the most rapidly expanding sector of the Chinese economy. This identification and the opportunities offered by the Party are probably slowly changing the goals of the urban worker. He may be less interested than he once was in returning to a plot of land in the country, where economic opportunities are increasingly restricted. He knows, after attending one Party meeting, that the peasantry is no longer the favored class in the Chinese economy.

25. Enlightenment Daily, Jan. 23, 1955, p. 2.
26. Rostow, op. cit., p. 160.
27. Ibid., pp. 160-61.

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students of Wuhan University worked to win "victory from the flood."[30] The same report listed the work of these students accomplished; they dug 9,352 carloads and 100 boatloads of dirt, removed 151,838 "shoulder poles" of dirt, loaded and unloaded 5,437 carloads and 491 boatloads of dirt, and transported 2,009 carloads of dirt and 730 carloads of rocks. "Triumph over the flood" was achieved by human efforts. In fighting the flood of 1954, 12,000,000 refugees were used as common laborers.[31]

An editorial in the People's Daily on December 19, 1954 not only summed up the flood and relief situation, but also made certain criticisms. In some famine-stricken areas in Hupeh, sufficient attention was not paid to the organization of production to combat the famine. Some cadres did not have a clear idea of state relief and loans, and in these areas they grew slack or even gave up leadership. In the co-operation necessary among those engaged in fighting the flood and in flood prevention, some groups failed to respond with "full understanding and whole-hearted support."[32]

V. CHILD WELFARE

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Following the international practice of dedicating one day in the year to children, April 4 was promulgated as China's Children's Day by the Nationalist Government in 1931. But the Chinese Communist

30. Ibid., Oct. 20, 1954, p. 2.

31. Relief Work Under the Chinese Communists, p. 10.

32. People's Daily, Dec. 19, 1954, p. 1.

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regime changed this date to June 1st, in accordance with a decision made by the International Democratic Women's Federation in 1949 at Moscow.[33] Children's Day as it is celebrated in the United States and in Great Britain was branded as capitalistic, i. e., not designed for the well-being of the children of the laboring classes. Around June 1st every year, all the propaganda media are mobilized for the promotion of child welfare, praise of the happy state of children in Communist China and in the Communist bloc of nations, and derogatory references to the "plight" of children in free nations. And it is also around this time in most large cities on the China Mainland that health examinations for children are conducted. In the period 1950-52, according to one report, more than 1,000,000 children throughout China received health examinations.[34]

On the morning of June 1, 1952, more than 2,000 young representatives of various schools, including representatives from the Soviet Union, Korea, India, Japan, gathered in Wuhan to celebrate Children's Day. Words of greeting were delivered by municipal officials, labor models, and a "fighting heroine," as well as by the Red Dean of Canterbury, Hewlett Johnson, who at this time was touring Communist China. In the afternoon, more than 10,000 children participated in a celebration held in Chung-shan Park.[35]

33. Hung Hsin-t'ao, Chi-nien Chieh-jih Shih-shih T'i-liao [History of the Memorial Days], Shanghai, 1953, Vol. I, pp. 180-83.

34. Hsin-hua Jih-pao [New China Daily], Chungking, May 30, 1953, p. 3.

35. Yangtze Daily, June 2, 1952, p. 1.

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and servicemen; preferential treatment of, and compassionate payments to, disabled servicemen; citations and compassionate payments for revolutionary workers injured or killed, and citations and compassionate payments for members of the People's Militia and laborers in military service injured or killed.[46] The preferential treatment of families of "martyrs" and servicemen included land and farming implements, government scholarships for their children, lower prices, discounts, etc. Only in cases of extreme hardship were direct payments given.

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At the time of the lunar new year in 1951, which fell on February 6 in that year, the Communists promoted a campaign to honor the families of the Chinese People's Volunteers and the People's Liberation Army. Since then, the lunar new year, usually called the Spring Festival, and Chinese Communist Army Day, August 1, have been made the occasions for honoring the families of servicemen.

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As part of the program to aid the dependents of "martyrs" and servicemen, those in the city able to work have been taught various handicrafts to assure their livelihood; in the rural areas, for those unable to work, a system of substitute-tilling has been adopted whereby land owned by such dependents is cultivated for them.

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The Central South Military and Political Committee in its annual report of 1951-52 announced oustand-

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46. Hsin-hua Yüeh-pao [New China Monthly], Peking, Vol. III, No. 3, Jan. 1951, pp. 516-21.

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APPENDIX 7

The Principal Festivals of the Chinese Calendar.

527 A list of anniversaries and saint's days could be made out which would rival a Catholic calendar, some of which have been already mentioned, but here we will give only the national days, which are usually unconnected with any particular religion. Many days are therefore omitted which are generally popular, such as the birthday of Kuanyin. It will be noticed that the dates given are nearly always the 1st and 15th of the month, which are the new and full moon, respectively, or days when the number and day of the month are the same, such as the 2nd of the 2nd month and the 3rd of the 3rd month.

1. Hsin Nien, or New Year : the first day is the new moon and usually
新年
falls in February, but the addition of about seven intercallory months in twenty years indicates the considerable variation. The New Year period lasts for fifteen days and the observances are too numerous to give in full. They usually include family reunions, with feasts and the worship of ancestors, New Years calls, baths, new clothes, cleaning of the house, the smearing of chicken blood on a paper which is placed outside the door, and a good deal of gambling. It is the only time of the year when drunken men can be seen on the streets of an unforeignized Chinese city. Among the events of the fifteen days period are :

The worship of the City-God.

The worship of the God of Wealth.

The marriage of the rats, when people go to be early and paper flowers are strewn above the bed to bless the rodent nuptials.

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The driving away of ghosts and demons, especially foxes, by noise, lights and fires in which aromatic leaves are burnt.

The sending away of the ancestors.

The placing of the new picture of the Kitchen God above the stove.

The period ends with the Yuen Hsiao Chieh, the Festival of Lanterns, 元宵節

on the 15th. It seems to be held in order to secure rain for the spring ploughing. Illuminated paper dragons are carried through the streets and into houses, bringing luck for the year.

2. The 2nd of the 2nd month, when the Earth Gods are worshipped.

3. The Ch'ing Ming a spring festival whose date varies around the first 清明

of April, when the dead are worshipped at their graves. Formerly a fast was observed.

4. The Shan Tzi Chieh, on the 3rd of the 3rd month, a day of sacrifice 上巳節

to spirits. An old custom, now dying out, was to bathe in order to cleanse away evil influences, and many went into the country on picnics. On this day the « Lights of the Dead » are seen.

5. On the 19th of the 3rd month, women worship the sun and fast. It is not far away from the western May Day. I have been told that in ancient times May Day custums[1] existed, but they have disappeared.

6. The Tung Wu, or Dragon Boat Festival, on the 5th of the 5th month, 端午

which falls about the summer solstice. It is evidently a rain festival. There are races between boats whose prows are shaped to resemble dragon heads, paddled like canoes by some tens of half naked men, to the accompaniment of gongs and firecrackers. The story of the poet and statesman, Ch'u Yuen 屈原

seems to be a later attempt to explain the practice.

1 [Errata: should be customs. Cf. Errata Sheet, p. 204, cat. 116 -- Analyst]

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•527 7. The 15th of the 7th month, a time for the worship and propitiation of ghosts and spirits, when the Yu Lan Huei is held.

8. The Ch'ung Yang Chieh, on the 8th of the 9th month, when people 重陽節
ascend hills, pagodas and high places. An apocryphal story has been invented for this practice also.

9. The Chung Ch'iu Chieh, or Mid Autumn Festival, on the 15th of the 中秋節
8th month, in honor of the moon. Special cakes are offered to her, together with fruit, wine and tea.

10. The Shih Yueh Chao, the 1st of the 10th month, when spirits and 十月朝
ghosts are worshipped.

11. The Tung Chih, or Winter Solstice, when sacrifices are offered to 冬至
ancestors in the clan temples.

12. The sending of the Kitchen God to heaven on the 23rd of the 12th month.

13. The "Little New Year" when the ancestors are welcomed back to the home, on the 24th of the 12th month.

There are numerous customs observed on New Year's Eve, such as the lighting of all the rooms in the house.

The only careful study of Chinese festivals that I know of is De Groot's account of the festivals of Amoy.